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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Call from Mark Bender, "Congressional Quarterly"

1. Mark Bender, of the "Congressional Quarterly," called and said that they had decided against pursuing the National Reconnaissance Office angle in the "Congressional Quarterly" story on the report of the Special Committee to Study Questions Related to Secret and Confidential Government Documents but were doing a special on CIA and the intelligence community and would appreciate answers to the following questions:

(a) Have CIA's congressional relations been damaged as a result of [redacted] activities, the Ellsberg profile and the secret war in Laos?

(b) Has Congress stepped up its demands on the CIA for greater disclosure, particularly with respect to budgetary and operational matters?

(c) What has the Agency done or attempted to do to soothe congressional outcries for more accountability?

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I told Bender that someone would be in contact with him.

2. I asked Bender if he had obtained answers to these questions from the Congress since they concern congressional viewpoints. Bender said Senator Symington had told him there was a need for greater accountability, and in response to my question, he said Symington was referring to Congress in general and not his oversight committee.

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3. Off the record I told Bender that this was an important distinction, in view of the fact that Congress itself lays down the rules on oversight, and the Agency complies. I also told him that the Agency has never engaged in a public relations program but that our image on the Hill would hopefully be based on our responsiveness to a variety of congressional committees in our specialty, which is to give the unvarnished truth on a variety of foreign developments.

4. Bender tried to draw me out on whether a public budget would in fact affect vital U.S. security interests, and I told him that there were obvious pros and cons and the final determination will depend upon which are the most convincing needs for both the short term and in the long run. I told Bender that I thought that there were some very positive statements concerning the questions he had raised in the hearings on Mr. Colby's confirmation.

5. In closing, Bender said they felt they pretty much had the story from the congressional side but wanted to give us an opportunity for our input.

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Associate Legislative Counsel

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